

VZCZCXYZ0003  
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHSQ #0812 2820854  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 090854Z OCT 07  
FM AMEMBASSY SKOPJE  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6594  
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE 0055  
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD 0033  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC  
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC  
RHMFSS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC  
RUESEN/SKOPJE BETA  
RUEHSQ/USDAO SKOPJE MK  
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

UNCLAS SKOPJE 000812

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/SCE, NEA/I;  
SECDEF FOR OSD DASD CAGAN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: IZ MASS MK PGOV PREL

SUBJECT: MACEDONIA: GOM POSITIVELY CONSIDERS ADDITIONAL  
TROOPS FOR IRAQ

¶11. (SBU) Following up on DASD Cagan's September 28 meetings in Skopje with MOD Elenovski and CHOD Stojanovski to request an additional Macedonian platoon for operations in Iraq (septel), P/E Chief conveyed Cagan's points in separate meetings with MFA State Counselor for Bilateral Relations with Non-European Countries Vasko Grkov; the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff, Martin Protoger; the Chairs of the Parliamentary Committees for Foreign Affairs (Flora Kadriu) and Defense (Vlatko Gjorcev); and with President Crvenkovski's Chief of Cabinet Natasa Savova, and Foreign Policy Adviser, Stevo Pendarovski.

¶12. (SBU) The MFA's Grkov said he expected full GOM support for the request, which would double Macedonia's contributions in Iraq. However, he cautioned that the cost of enhanced salaries for the additional platoon would probably have to be included in next year's budget, meaning the troops likely would not deploy until January 2008. Foreign Affairs Committee Chair Kadriu said she did not expect any controversy over the request for additional troops, pointing out that the Macedonian parliament had unanimously approved all past deployments, whether to Iraq or Afghanistan. Defense Committee Chair Gjorcev was equally positive, commenting that it would be useful for Macedonia to demonstrate that, while other Iraq coalition partners might be walking away from their commitments, Macedonia could be counted on to step up to the plate and deliver when it counted. President Crvenkovski's Chief of Cabinet said both the President and Prime Minister Gruevski had discussed DASD Cagan's request and were positively inclined to support it, provided the MOD's and CHOD's assessment indicated the troops could be deployed without undermining progress on Macedonia's NATO-related defense reform process.

¶13. (SBU) The Defense Committee Chair later suggested to P/E Chief that, once the GOM had made its decision to support the request for the additional platoon, it would be useful for State and DoD to jointly reach out to the media here to explain the rationale for the request, since he only expected potential opposition from that quarter. He suggested asking State and DoD officials to take part in a DVC with post, at the appropriate time, to fully brief the media on the details of the additional deployment.

MILOVANOVIC